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**Subject:** submitting this to the ZBA as a public comment letter Feb 10, 2021 55 Summer Street 40B

In my opinion developed from formal training and on the job training from very knowable instructors and workers. I

attended numerous mass casualty seminars where I met many safety engineers including the Chief Safety Officer (CSO) for CSX the Railroad Company who owned the Summer Street railroad ground crossing. The CSO made it a point to spend time with me when we were at the seminars together. The very first time we met he looked at my name tag and asked how my children were doing. He explained that he knew that my children were in a vehicle that a CSX Freight train collided with at the Summer Street Ground Crossing. He was very candid and said the Summer Street Ground Crossing was the most dangerous in his jurisdiction, and CSX had decided to Abandon it, because CSX could not make it safe. Four Quad Gates controlled by radar and infrared were considered by CSX. However, the CSX right of way did not provide a large enough footprint for Four Quad gates and the lack of needed line of site reduced by curvature of the track bed renders radar and infrared capabilities useless. A distant third option was placing concrete barriers on both sides of the tracks that would add a little safety by keeping vehicles off the tracks, but a vehicle can still crash into the barriers causing an obstruction in the trains path. and all the bad things still happen. The driver of the train cannot stop in time, because when the driver can see an obstruction at the ground crossing when traveling as slow as 10 miles per hour, or faster than 40 miles per hour the driver cannot stop in time. A collision at the ground crossing will result in a terrible derailment of a passenger train, because of the curvature of the railroad tracks approaching the ground crossing. Such a derailment involving an MBTA passenger train would be without a doubt a mass casualty incident and the reason I attended those seminars on my own dime. Increasing safety slightly by deadening Summer Street on both sides of the ground crossing railroad tracks has a very costly affect on the quality of life and property values in South Walpole. South Walpole residents will be denied access to the nearby schools, shopping centers, and recreation (pool). Fire protection will be delayed and less effective. Insurance costs will increase, because of a reduction in fire protection. Police Protection will be delayed reducing safety in the community. Ambulance support will take longer transportation to Hospitals and clinics will be slower and limited. Health care will suffer. Deadening Summer Street is unacceptable. The Summer Street 40B must be denied if the MBTA railroad Summer Street Ground Crossing is not abandoned by the MBTA. This High capacity 40B will result in doubling or tripling traffic across the railroad tracks exponentially increasing the risk of gridlock resulting in potential sudden and violent death for residents and travelers in South Walpole on any given day.

Having shared my knowledge about the dangerousness of the Summer Street Railroad crossing I hope you share my shock when the MBTA announced it was taking over the Summer Street

ground crossing. Of course, the MBTA claimed they only wanted to preserve the Summer Street ground crossing for use in case of an emergency to maintain passenger train traffic to and from Boston and Providence. Today they use it for special events at the stadium. They have suspended daily passenger train traffic to the stadium during the 40B construction. However, the MBTA is quietly planning six new train routes by MBTA passenger trains servicing six new markets, which will greatly increase train traffic across Summer Street. A local newspaper reporter exposed that the stadium has built six layover tracks on stadium property for the future six new train routes. The Foxboro Board of Selectmen denied this at their meeting but abutters confirmed what the reporter said. My concern is the MBTA has done nothing to make the Summer Street Ground Crossing safe. When Walpole Town Officials including the Select Board went to Summer Street to use radar to clock the speed of the MBTA passenger train none of the safety equipment activated and the passenger train roared across Summer Street without warning. No blast of the horn nothing. I was not present but was told what happened. The MBTA has not formally reported what went wrong, however, it has come to light that there exists an electromagnetic device that has caused other ground crossing safety equipment to fail at other locations. The MBTA has not provided adequate safety equipment to defeat this new deadly threat, nor has the MBTA eliminated the same deadly threats that led CSX to abandon the Summer Street ground crossing.

In my opinion all officials who have played any role in approving this Summer Street 40B including the MBTA officials who must approve the safety of construction plans abutting the railroad tracks. Including all those officials who are responsible for the approval of plans that abut its railroad tracks must be liable for negligence in performing their duties if the construction creates a dangerous event, or situation.

In my humble opinion the same safety concerns that caused CSX to choose the only option they could live with, which was to abandon the Summer Street ground crossing have not been resolved by the MBTA. In fact, a new threat under the intelligent control of humans has raised its ugly head Electromagnetic devices. The MBTA has no defense to prevent this new threat. Today the old threats are still true the MBTA still cannot alert the driver of the passenger train if the tracks on Summer Street are obstructed unbelievable. It is especially insane when we consider the MBTA and the Stadium are planning to increase adding six new MBTA passenger train routes from six new markets to the Stadium, combined with the potential for 300 or more new vehicles from the 40B with its only entrance and exit abutting the Summer St. Ground crossing. Gridlock at the Summer Street ground crossing is an invitation for a Mass Casualty event. The 55 Summer Street 40B is proposing a second Emergency Exit in an unacceptable location on Summer Street that lacks the line of sight needed for a curb cut for a drive way. If used this emergency exit will require a three Police Officer detail in order to use it. Keep in mind the Summer Street ground crossing was abandoned. The MBTA took it over under the claim it would be an emergency route during a disaster. We know that is not true now. Was it true when they took it over? Before the 40B can be approved the many very dangerous safety issues must be resolved.

The safety of the residents and travelers in South Walpole is the responsibility of our Town Officials, Mass Housing officials, officials advising Town Boards, MBTA officials, and DEP officials

If a catastrophic event occurs resulting in death and body injury, and criminal negligence can not be found than a class action civil suit must be pursued so we should begin putting our ducks in a row. I have witnessed some close calls between MBTA passenger trains and vehicles because it is in fact a blind intersection for vehicle traveling East. Of course, that was before Gates were installed again, but we know the new gates did not come down once, and people have a device that can make that happen again. CSX abandoned this railroad crossing, because of safety issues they could not eliminate. Before Mass Housing and the MBTA put our people at risk of death and dismembering they must go on the record with the 40B including the consultants that all the known safety issues have been addressed and eliminated. If they cannot do that, they must withdraw their approvals, or risk being criminally, or civilly liable. I am delighted that others are preparing for a class action. We need to do it for safety of our friends and family.

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